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Porous Borders and the Extreme Security Climate of India





MISSION

We endeavour to sound **ALERTS** and create **AWARENESS** about the myriad dimensions and manifestations of **DEFENCE** and **SECURITY** in India and around the world.



The power of a King lies in his mighty arms...

Security of the citizens at peace time is very important because State is the only saviour of the men and women who get affected only because of the negligence of the State.

- Chanakya



DSA IS AS MUCH YOURS, AS IT IS OURS!



Borders are making big news currently. Whether it is the matter of firings across the Line of Control with Pakistan, the more pressing Doklam standoff with China or even the lesser Indo-Nepal issue. Borders have a tendency to make headlines, especially in a region like South Asia, and in the neighbourhood that India lives in. The types and varieties of borders that India has responsibility for, are mind boggling indeed. It takes enormous assets, manpower as well as material, to manage such a myriad variety. And the issue of borders is essentially that of management.

The Line of Control (LoC), dividing Jammu and Kashmir between India and Pakistan is alive with terrorist crossing, firing and the occasional assault on posts scattered in the gullies and mountain tops. It is a live border in that sense, except that it is not a border in the legal way, but a militarily adjusted ceasefire line. India and Pakistan agreed to the contours of the LoC once the 1971 War negotiations were completed, whilst renaming it from its

original Ceasefire Line. Whatever the labels, the LoC has remained as porous and vulnerable as ever. More so since terrorism began in the Kashmir Valley in late 1989.

The Line of Actual Control between India and China, and Chinese administered Tibet, is a relic of the Raj, in a real sense of the word. Originally known as the MacMahon Line, its legitimacy has been questioned by the neo-imperialist authorities in Beijing. Their position on the MacMahon Line has shifted according to changing political and military conditions. Much as the Chinese position on nuclear and missile proliferation has shifted over the years, so has its border posture. Just as positions change, so Beijing also keeps shifting its goalposts. The rivals must always know where the new goalposts are placed before shooting a kick at it.

All of India's other borders, including its maritime ones, are delineated and largely respected. Where they are not respected is in the sphere of smuggling, contraband and narcotics, as well as human trafficking. This is a

crime for which the world is yet to find a workable solution. There is another violation too, and that involves fishermen transgressing into another country's waters. While the case of Indian and Pakistani fishermen off the Gujarat coast is common reading, the case of illegal shipping in Sri Lankan waters is not so well known. At least not in India. Increasingly, large trawlers are wiping out the island nation's precious stocks. It is a sore point in Sri Lanka and the local fishermen sometimes resort to violence against the Indian intruders. Which gets much publicised in India as Sri Lankan Navy brutality but is in fact, terrain conflict between two sets of fishermen which brings to the fore about the nature of borders. There are those that should be encouraged for trade, which means making them more open and amenable to travel. And then there are those that need to be tightened, like the two 'Lines' that cause nightmares.

Manvendra Singh



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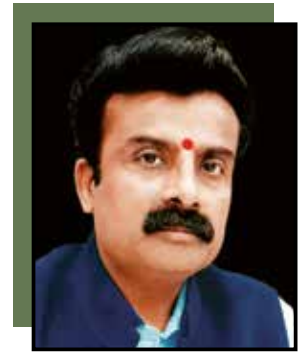
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 info: info@dsalert.org
 articles: articles@dsalert.org
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 advertisement: advt@dsalert.org

Editorial and Corporate Office
 Prabhat Prakashan Tower
 4/19, Asaf Ali Road
 New Delhi-110002 (India)
 +91-011-23243999, 23287999, 9958382999
 info@dsalert.org | www.dsalert.org

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POROUS BORDERS AND THE EXTREME SECURITY CLIMATE OF INDIA

Borders are a hallmark of a nation-State. The concept of borders grew out of a human urge in primitive man (and even animal instincts) for secure territorial control. It was out of this innate urge that civilisations within territorial limits and clear jurisdiction were born and flourished.

Over the millennia, nation-States and civilisations have evolved methodology to secure borders with neighbouring states through the concept of delineation (identifying the location of a mutually accepted border on maps) and demarcation (marking with border posts, barbedwire fence, etc. on the ground). This is done through the internationally accepted principles of border marking like the watershed (the crest of the local mountain range), median line in a river or waterway, or possession through custom and usage. This line is then to be protected through the deployment of border guards.

The difficulty that India faces in making its borders sacrosanct is the long length of land borders. Some like Pakistan and China are extremely inimical to India and are involved in instigating cross-border terrorism. Myanmar cooperates in maintaining pressure on insurgents operating from its side of the border in the north-east India. With Nepal, we have an open border which is being used for anti-India activities by the Pakistan Army Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI). With Bangladesh, we have the largest land border and we are lucky that the current ruler Sheikh Hasina Wazed does not tolerate any anti-India activity. With Bhutan, the close rapport was demonstrated during the Doklam crisis in which China tried to browbeat the peace-loving nation to sever strategic relations with India.

It is this wide canvas of threats that this edition addresses.

Next month, **DSA** will be completing eight years of its existence and I promise to provide a collector's edition to mark the occasion. Also, there will be an Air Force Special on the occasion of the Indian Air Force Day in October.

Happy reading!
Jai Hind!

Pawan Agrawal



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Pawan Agrawal, CEO & Publisher

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